

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT KS

SUBJECT: STUDENT SITUATION

REF: SEOUL 7981

1. CONTINUING STUDENT PROTEST ACTIVITY NOV 29 OCCURRED AT YONSEI, KOREA, KYONGHUI, HANYANG, SUDO AND SUKMYONG UNIVERSITIES AND METHODIST SEMINARY.
2. ABOUT 2,000 STUDENTS AT YONSEI UNIVERSITY ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS INCLUDING DEMAND TO RESTORE HABIAS CORPUS AT A MEETING ON CAMPUS NOV 29. GROUP OF ABOUT 500 THEN MARCHED SHORT DISTANCE OFF CAMPUS AND CONFRONTED RIOT POLICE. POLICE USED TEAR GAS AND PEPPER FOG AND STUDENTS THREW STONES. STUDENTS RETREATED ON TO CAMPUS AND AT A LATER POINT DISPERSED. UONSEI OFFICIAL INFORMED EMBASSY THAT FACULTY MEETING THIS EVENING IS EXPECTED TO DECIDE TO CANCEL EXAMINATIONS AND CLOSE THE SCHOOL.

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3. AT KOREA UNIVERSITY, 33 STUDENTS WHO STARTED

HUNGER SIT-IN NOV 28 WERE JOINED IN PROTEST MEETING BY ABOUT 200 OTHERS. LATER, GROUP OF ABOUT 500 STUDENTS ASSEMBLED INSIDE CAMPUS GATE AND THREW ROCKS AT RIOT POLICE, WHO RESPONDED WITH TEAR GAS AND PEPPER FOG.

4. ABOUT 120 STUDENTS OF METHODIST SEMINARY MET ON CAMPUS AND DEMANDED FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND CONSCIENCE AND FREEDOM FROM SURVEILLANCE ON CAMPUS. GROUP OF 52 MARCHED SHORT DISTANCE OFF CAMPUS AND WERE PICKED UP BY POLICE. OTHERS ON CAMPUS CONTINUED DEMONSTRATION UNTIL POLICE ASSURED SCHOOL AUTHORITIES THAT ALL THOSE PICKED UP WOULD BE RELEASED.

5. ON-CAMPUS RALLIES ALSO OCCURRED AT SUDO WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY (800) AND AHNYANG UNIVERSITY (500). AT KYONGHUI UNIVERSITY ABOUT 500 STUDENTS HELD PROTEST MEETING AND THEN MADE BRIEF FORAY OFF CAMPUS. STUDENTS THREW ROCKS AND POLICE USED TEAR GAS. DEMONSTRATORS THEN DISPERSED.

6. WITH REGARD 3000 EHWA GIRLS ON THE STREET AT NIGHTFALL NOV 28 (REFTEL), UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT KIM OK-KIL PERSUADED THEM LATER IN EVENING TO MOVE TO AUDITORIUM, WHERE MOST OF THEM SPENT THE NIGHT. PRESIDENT KIM AND 300 FACULTY REPORTEDLY WERE PRESENT THROUGHOUT. BEFORE DISBANDING THIS MORNING GIRLS RESOLVED TO DEMAND RELEASE OF ALL ARRESTED STUDENTS BY DEC 2, FAILING WHICH THEY WOULD MEET AGAIN. ALSO CALLED FOR BOYCOTT OF JAPANESE GOODS AND RESOLVED AGAIN TO WEAR BLACK RIBBONS. EHWA AUTHORITIES HAVE CLOSED THE SCHOOL THROUGH DECEMBER 2. HOWEVER, ABOUT 20 STUDENT LEADERS ARE REMAINING ON CAMPUS IN HUNGER STRIKE.

7. COMMENT: THERE IS A CONTINUING PATTERN OF ESCALATION IN STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS WITH THREE CONFRONTATIONS WITH POLICE REPORTED TODAY. NONE OF DEMONSTRATIONS SO FAR HAVE TESTED POLICE ABILITY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO CONTAIN THEM. HOWEVER, PERISITENCE OF STUDENTS POSES THE POSSIBILITY OF SERIOUS CLASHES AND SHOULD HURRY REMAINING OPEN UNIVERSITIES TO CLOSE FOR THE SEMESTER. UNDERHILL

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